

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-0926

June 23, 2020

Jacob Walden  
Managing Partner  
Emerald Health Care Center  
99 W Hawthorne Ave  
Valley Stream, New York 11581

Dear Mr. Walden:

I write to you today to express my extreme concern with the Crystal Health & Rehab Center, a nursing home located in Tavernier, Florida. As you are no doubt aware, this facility has become a cluster for COVID-19 cases. At least 18 residents and 8 staff members have tested positive for COVID-19 in the month of May, and a recent report from the Agency for Health Care Administration found 13 unreported deaths from the facility.

I recently met with family members of residents of the facility, who relayed their concerns to me regarding the lack of information and clarity coming from the nursing center, as well as questionable practices that were happening at the nursing home. They reported the misuse and shortage of masks, testing being damaged or contaminated resulting in the need to re-test, not being updated on the status of their loved ones in the facility, and having to rely on local media to hear about test results instead of hearing directly from the nursing home. Other constituents have also reported to me that the staffing levels at the facility are not meeting state minimum standards, with at times one or two staff members responsible for tending to all residents.

These reported actions are unconscionable. During this crisis, family and friends deserve to be regularly informed as to the status of their loved ones, many of whom are medically vulnerable and thus more susceptible to serious outcomes from this disease. Furthermore, they deserve to know that each of the residents are being adequately tended to and have access to the equipment and medication they need.

Your residents and their loved ones deserve better. Please let me know how you plan to improve this situation. Additionally, please provide me with written response to the following questions by Friday, July 3:

1. What steps have you taken to ensure this facility is following the latest infection control measures released by the CDC and CMS?
2. What are you doing to guarantee that all staff have the personal protective equipment (PPE) needed each day?
3. How often are you having the residents and staff tested for COVID-19 cases? What are you doing to ensure the integrity of the testing?

4. How are you working to increase staffing levels to meet not only the minimum requirements established by the federal government and the state, but also needed to respond to a COVID-19 cluster in the facility? Is the facility prepared to use separate staffing teams for residents to the best of their ability to avoid internal transmission?
5. What actions have you taken to train the staff on best practices regarding COVID-19?
6. What is your current turnaround to report test results to the family members of residents of the Crystal Health & Rehab Center?
7. How are you actively communicating with state and local governments to better access PPE and testing, and ensure that separate facilities or units within your facility are designated to separate COVID-19 negative residents from COVID-19 positive residents and individuals with unknown COVID-19 status?
8. How are you implementing symptom screening for all staff, residents, and visitors?
9. What cleaning and disinfection protocols are you taking?
10. How are you monitoring the status of availability for local hospitals to accept transfers from your facility?

Sincerely,



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Debbie Mucarsel-Powell  
Member of Congress